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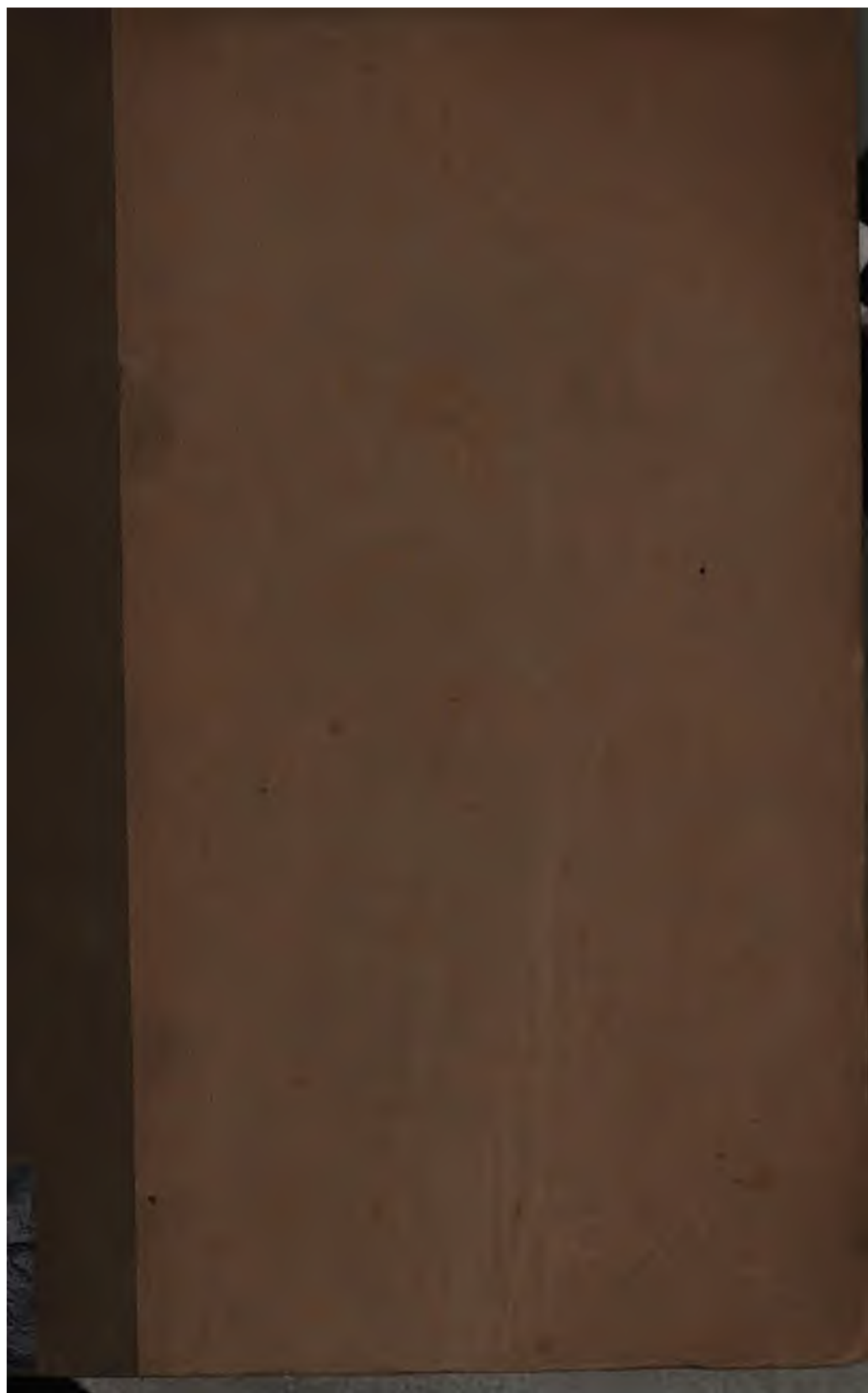
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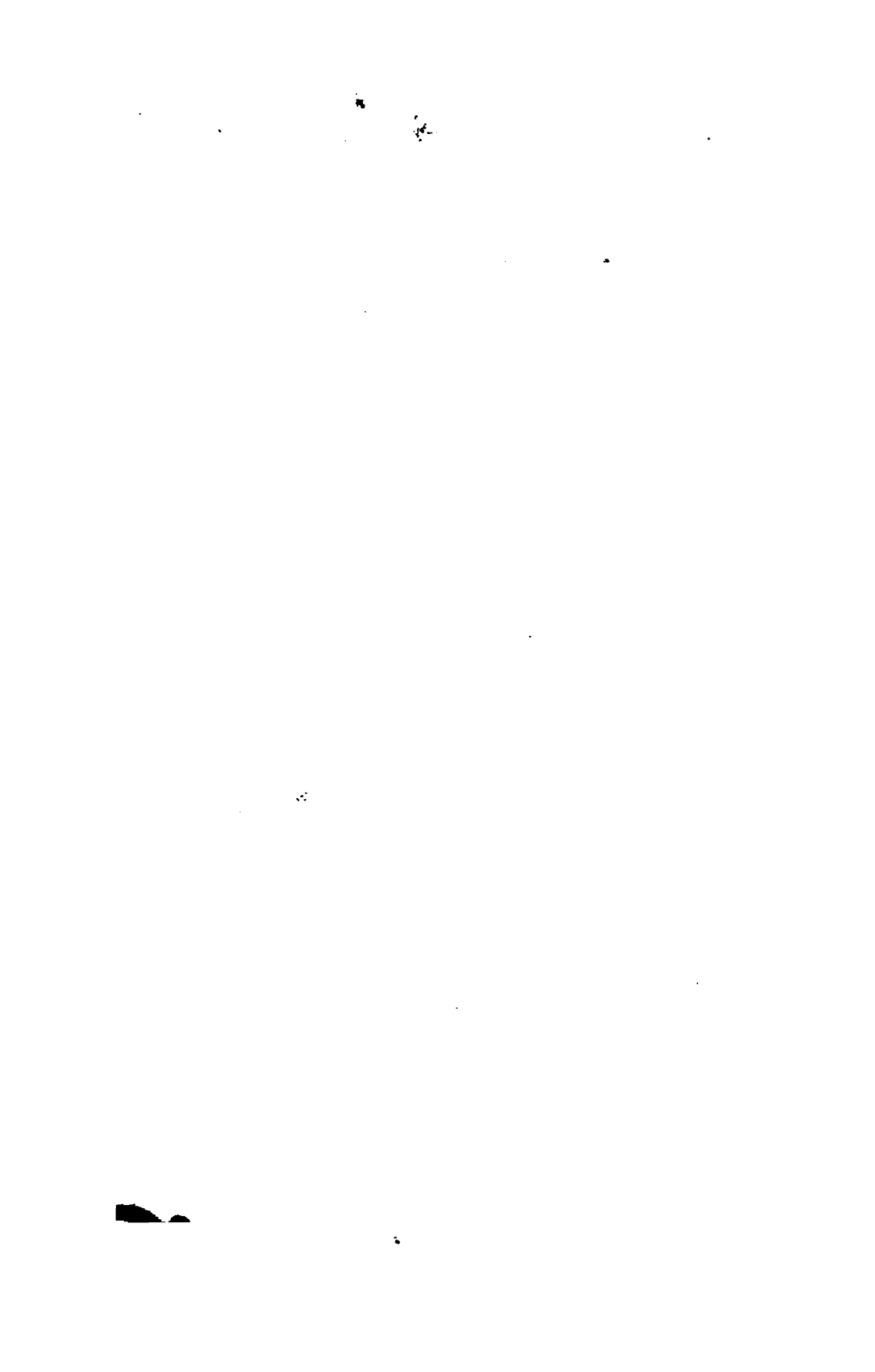
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**FIFTY SONNETS.**



# FIFTY SONNETS

ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THAT POEM.

By M. MONTAGU.

*FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.*

*Un Sonnet sans défauts vaut seul un long Poème.*

BOILEAU, A. P. II. 94.

“ From grave to gay, from lively to severe.”

POPE. Epl. IV. 370.

LONDON.

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# DEDICATION.

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TO MY FRIENDS.

THESE POETICAL TRIFLES,  
THE LAST PRINTED TESTIMONY  
OF MY REGARD,  
ARE AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY THEIR'S VERY SINCERELY,

M. M.





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## NOTES.



## PREFACE.

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AMONG my M. S. Poems intended for posthumous publication (for which there are left full directions and abundant means) are numerous SONNETS, both Original and Translated ; among the latter all the best French and Italian, including the greater part of Petrarch's. The Fifty here given have been written since the putting away of the above Mass, chiefly within the present year 1860, and may serve as specimens of the rest.

My object in this is Threefold : Firstly,—As I have now turned the great corner of life (*æt.* lxxiv) and have no time to lose for the accomplishment of any practicable design,—To have the satisfaction of seeing these few Pieces entyped :

“ 'T is sweet, you know, to see one'sself in print.”

4

Nextly\_\_To show them as a Pattern for the arrangement of those hereafter to follow ; and especially as to the however minor point of Punctuation, about which I am more than commonly studious, taking it to be of much more importance for determining the sense (and especially in Poetry, from its inversions and ellipses) than is generally considered, which indeed is very little if at all : and Lastly\_\_For the gratification of offering them to Friends.

For a short account of our here Form of Verse. The SONNET is a Poem of a peculiar and absolute construction ; not to speak of the usual general forms, the only one I think of that kind in our language, of course adopted from abroad. It is of Italian birth ; having originated in that Country, and being still continually practised and used there, by all who have any the least pretensions to court the Muses, on all imaginable subjects and occasions. It is said to have been “invented” or first framed by Guittone d’Arezzo,\* who flourished about the middle of the thirteenth Century ; at least the oldest one known is by him.

\* For Notes see the End.

THE SONNET is composed of Fourteen Lines; divided into Two Quatrains (or four-line Stanzas) and Two Tiercets (or three-line Stanzas) the former with two rhymes only, and the latter two or three at will: the Quatrains rhyming either alternately, or the first fourth fifth and eighth lines rhyming together, and the third and fourth with the sixth and seventh: when rhyming alternately it seems (as *i. a.* here in our Sonnets 1, 11, and 12) more harmonious for the Second Quatrain to begin with a new alternation, the fourth and fifth lines rhyming together. The Tiercets may be rhymed with either two or three rhymes, at pleasure; but in no case successively, nor ending with a couplet: No very good reason can be given for this latter point; but its propriety will at once be felt by a good ear; at all events the universal practice of Italy has made it a law, and must therefor be observed. Combining Practice with Theory, we have endeavoured to embody and exemplify this in our Sonnet 1, as a Foot-Note to the rest.†

Whatever may be their intrinsic merits, the French Sonnets are always perfectly legitimate in their construction; in their Quatrains generally following the more usual rather than the alternately-



rhymed one; and in the Tiercets a form almost peculiarly their own, and which I consider much the most harmonious of any, and have accordingly almost invariably used it in my own, as here in Sonnets 1, 2, 3, etc:

BOILEAU, in his *Art Poétique* (C. 2. L. 81\_102) has given a very good account of The Sonnet, tho' certainly somewhat overrating its merits: as follows, only substituting for the French Poets he names the general sense.

“ *On dit à ce propos qu' un jour ce Dieu bizarre.*”

UPON The *Sonnet's* origin, they say,—  
 Apollo, in a wayward mood, one day,  
 The Gallic Rhymsters to their shifts to put,  
 Thus framed its laws, thence license to outshut:  
 Bade that in two Quatrains, of form alike,  
 The Rhyme twice-toned eight times the ear should strike;  
 And that the Sense, arranged with dext'rous art,  
 In two Tiercets the last six lines should part.  
 'Bove all he thence all incorrectness chased;  
 Himself the number and the cadence placed;  
 Forbade that one weak verse should wound the ear,  
 Nor that a word once used should reappear;  
 And with unrivall'd beauties cloth'd its song:  
 A faultless SONNET 's worth a Poem long.

But, vainly unnumber'd Poets have tried its strains,  
 The sought-for Phoenix still unfound remains :  
 One scarce shall find, among their List entire,  
 Out of a thousand two or three to admire ;  
 The others, from the Publisher's or " Trade,"  
 To the Trunk-maker's but one step have made ;  
 To enclose its sense within the bounds assign'd,  
 The measure still too long or short they find.

As every body knows, the French class their Rhymes as Masculine and Feminine, the former ending with a consonant or an accented vowel,† and the latter with a mute *e* ; and it is an invariable rule in their Poetry for these to alternate. This we consider a very great beauty, both to the eye and the ear ; very much making up for its deficiencies in other respects ; and which, like the inversions in our own, often give a poetical air and character where the *disjecta membra* are entirely wanting : Moreover they have it entirely to themselves, no other language, with some slight exceptions, admitting of it : Nevertheless it is also practicable in ours to a small extent ; and is especially applicable to the Sonnet, from its shortness and general character : we have accordingly now and then introduced it here, in, among others, Sonnets 6, 8, and the last.

THE SONNET is (or at least should be) eminently syllogistical and epigrammatic; of one single but full idea or proposition, with a beginning a middle and an end, and closing with a point: for the expression of which—a terse short pithy Piece—it is particularly well suited.

As BOILEAU very justly says, the perfectly made Sonnets, as well in their mechanism as in their essential properties, bear but a very small proportion to the defective ones. The mechanism—the mere minutiae—of a Sonnet of course is of much inferior consideration than its essence—the subject and the manner of treating it; that being only as it were the body, of which the latter is the soul: but, to be perfect, both should be exhibited in equal faultlessness. As to relative merits, excellence can only be determined by comparison; and all are not equally qualified to judge of it.

A thing either is or is not: if it be, it should wear the appearance proper to it—what it professes to be; otherwise it bears a misnomer. So all irregularly made Sonnets (of which we have so many) should rather be called *Fourteeners*; § then leaving them full latitude of Form, but which they already very usually take unpermitted. All that I mean

to contend for is that *ceteris paribus* the regular Sonnet is much better, and will always be more liked, than the Fourteener One.

The great merit and usefulness of the Sonnet is that, by its shortness, and—we may say—by the pleasing artificialness of its form, it gives a frame wherein to set any short poetical thought or idea that might otherwise have occurred to one for nothing from the want of an appropriate dress wherein to clothe it; and very advantageous it is for that purpose, and by which are preserved many a poetical gem that would otherwise be lost to us.

“Sonnet” is also sometimes used as a diminutive for short—little—poetical Pieces; but this of course only by *the uninitiated*: But the frequent unacquaintance with the thing, especially at this time of day, when information is so generally diffused, is something quite awful, and loudly calls for the interference of “the Schoolmaster.”

THE Sonnet has been called a bed of Procrustes; where the subject is stretched to or contracted within the given limits: but, however this may sometimes be done, a really good Sonnet will never betray the process. It is also sometimes held light, and even treated with a certain degree of disrespect,

from its being so short a Piece and apparently of so easy execution : but this is only from its being so often defectively done. So indifferent Poets are sometimes called “ Sonnetteers ” for Poetasters : but none are ever so called ironically that deserve the name in seriousness : As has been said of Puns,— No one ever despised the Sonnet who could appreciate or make a good one. *Enfin, pour dire toute la verité*, it is but a small matter ; very short, and in so far easy ; of no great merit where successful, and where a failure of little consequence ; therefor altogether a trivial affair, tho’ by no means disavowed by The Muses.

THESE Pages, not being intended for the public eye, are of course not amenable to public inquisition : Should they, however, fall into and be noticed by “ Reviewing ” hands, it is hoped they will be treated with candour, and the critical *fals* be applied to them with all practicable humanity.

M. M.

---

## ENVOY.

### SONNET.

In early days, when, first essaying to sing,  
We wooed the Muse in airy trifles light ;  
By partial smiles deceiv'd, in weak delight,  
We took them for due laud—as meriting.  
More late, embolden'd to a loftier flight,  
In public view we struck the lyric string ;  
But, Icarus-like, on insufficient wing  
Soon came down toppling from the dangerous height.  
Tho' haply later, less to bounds confin'd,  
To waken strains of more expanded kind,  
To Friends alone we in private offer these.  
Not here for flattering compliments to fish,  
Nor courting thanks ; but, aiming but to please,  
Whate'er the power—to show at least the wish.

1860.



## THE SONNET.

## SONNET 1.

WHAT is a *Sonnet*? 'T is a form of Poem,—  
Of Fourteen Lines ; dispos'd in two Quatrains,  
With but two rhymes, of corresponding strains,  
Alternate-rhymed, or as here framed to show 'em :  
And two Tiercets (or Triplets, as we know 'em)  
Arrang'd at will ; as here a choice obtains  
'Tween twice three ways ; but (so its law ordains)  
Into successive couplets ne'er to throw 'em.  
The subject any ; but, whate'er it be,  
In one full thought, clear-claus'd, and blemish free ;  
With a beginning—middle—and an end.  
This, clearly, only given as a sample  
Of its mere mechanism ; both to blend,  
And illustrating Precept by Example.

1860.



## THE BRAVE.

## SONNET 2.

THE BRAVE—The Brave ! whom peril nought alarms,  
The gallant ones who feel not—know not—fear ;  
Who—not a long—but seek a bright career ;  
For whom inglorious safety has no charms.  
The Brave—The Brave ! whose breasts true courage warms ;  
To whom far more than life is honour dear :  
Yea—honour to them be ! alike to cheer,  
If failure or success attend their arms.  
The Brave—The Brave ! our ENGLAND'S Sons are these :  
Who've brav'd at sea " the battle and the breeze ;"  
Nor less at land have every danger dared.  
Prompt to stand forth at Country's sacred call ;  
Whene'er attack'd—by whatso Foe, prepared  
In her defence to triumph or to fall !

1860.

## FREE ENGLAND.

## SONNET 3.

NOT thine, vain FRANCE ! with thy light " People's " reign  
A far worse tyranny establishing  
Than that o'erthrown with thy assassin'd King,  
Till outraged Reason fetter'd thee again.  
Nor thine, still vainer, and with darker stain,  
AMERICA ! with boast, in every thing,  
Of excellence, unsham'd exhibiting  
Thy fellow-man in slavery's galling chain !  
But, ENGLAND ! thine is *Liberty*, to bless ;  
Thine Freedom's soil, whose tread enfranchises ;  
With equal laws and equal rights for all.  
Long may'st Thou still retain thy high estate ;  
Free midst surrounding Nations kept in thrall,  
The Oppress'd ones' refuge, and the Tyrant's hate !

## BATH.

## SONNET 4.

'NEATH sheltering hills by cultur'd forests crown'd,  
Pleas'd down their slopes to Avon's banks to rear  
Her palaces, lo—*Bladud's* City fair;  
“Queen of the West,” in beauty sits enthron'd.  
This BATH: yet less for local charms renown'd  
Than th' healing wave, for which here still repair  
The suffering; fond, while breathe its balmy air,  
To enjoy the beauties of the scene around.  
Nor less gay Youth's than Age's choice resort,  
Here chasten'd pleasure holds its joyous Court,  
While hand-in-hand light mirth and wisdom go.  
Long flourish She! yea till, with all things' end,  
Her World-old Waters cease their bounteous flow,  
Nor more her fame throughout that World extend.

## WINE AND WATER.

## SONNET 5.

"*ARISTON men 'udor:*"<sup>1</sup> 'Water—best of drinks!'

So Pindar said, whate'er he may have thought;

And now, as in consistency he ought,

So the Tee-totaler says, whate'er he thinks.

As to "Ourselves" (tho' this the question blinks)

We much love Water\_\_\_\_\_in a case of drought;

But Wine far more, it deeming out and out—

Nectareous-juiced—the paragon of skinks.

Some fancy the commixture—Wine and Water;

But this spoils both (save haply for the sick)

Tho' doubtless more the former than the latter.

Howe'er this be, whatever taste prevails,

So long as 't is procurable—we'll stick

To Wine, and take to Water when that fails.

1860.

<sup>1</sup> For Notes see the End.

## FOR AN ALBUM.

## SONNET 6.

KIND Friends whoe'er, bold Knights or courtly Dames !  
For contributions of the Pen (not Purse)  
The Pencil, Music's numbers, Prose or Verse,  
The vacant Page your generous mite here claims.  
Nor asking aught of more ambitious aims  
Than what may please, so something to rehearse,  
Original or borrowed, lax or terse ;  
Or, if nought more, at least inscribe your names.  
So when, hereafter, parted on Life's road,  
With lapsing years—as these may be bestow'd,  
Dispers'd (or cold !) the friendly hands that wrote,—  
'Twill still be sweet, tho' pleasure mix'd with pain,  
The well-remember'd characters to note,  
And live the past in memory o'er again !

1854.

BURIDANUS HIS ASS.<sup>2</sup>

## SONNET 7.

THE Schools, to test *Free-will* or *not* thereby,—

Suppose Long-Ears, by equal craving press'd,  
'Tween corn and water, for the choice distress'd,  
And taking neither, hungry tho' and dry.

What ! doubtful while which want first satisfy,

Shall then he starve ? . . . Yes, or one point 's confess'd.

Nay, tho' an Ass—he's no such fool ; possess'd  
Of instinct, he'll take *both*, and that deny.

But this fam'd Sophism, tho' void of base,

And, as assuming an unnatural case,  
Proves nothing, yet a moral leaves withal :

Whene'er between two equal things to chuse,—

As 'tween two stools you to the ground may fall,  
Take instant one ; lest, wavering, both to lose.

## THE PYRAMIDS.

## SONNET 8.

As tho' uprear'd by more than mortal hand,  
O'er all beneath erecting them sublime,  
Triumphant o'er all else-devouring Time,  
Lo Egypt's mighty Piles still moveless stand.  
O, could they be th' historians of that Land;  
Perhaps ere Israel's sojourn—from its prime,  
What tales were theirs—the suffering—folly—crime—  
Of myriads e'en as their imbedding sand!  
Still live they on, while all around them dies;  
Their towering peaks still pointing to the Skies  
Whence all ordain'd—whence all affix'd its date.  
Yet (haply tho' not till *All* falls with them)  
They too shall fall . . . . . Serfs'—Sovereigns' common fate,  
*Death's* brow encircling with the diadem.

## MUMMY CORN.

## SONNET 9.

EXHUMED, whence midst (for sequent chiliad years)

The cerements of Egypt's dead it lay,

The votive Grain, again brought out to day,

Nor scarce its kind's—nor germ's appearance wears :

Yet, such the power of Nature 'gainst decay!—

The torpid Seed but asks the Sower's cares,

And, cast in earth, its wonted produce bears,

As worth or not—upstor'd or thrown away.

Type of the Etherial Spirit that informs

The living Frame, expir'd its hour that warms—

In seeming nought it lies, eluding view :

Till *The Last Day* ; when, whence awhile entomb'd—

Again to existence call'd, it lives anew,

For bliss or woe thenceforth undying doom'd !



ON POWERS'S STATUE OF  
THE GREEK SLAVE.<sup>3</sup>

SONNET 10.

Lo here the pride of Transatlantic Art  
 In Sculpture's branch!—A "Fair," in chains confin'd;  
 Not those indeed of Love, but that hard kind  
 'Neath which the Captive Wretch or Felons smart.  
 Yet strange (however well the Chisel's part  
 Has seconded the imaginative mind)  
 To see those chains a feeble Woman bind,  
 Where nude and guarded in the Human Mart!  
 But, POWERS! (thy task thus better to perform)  
 Why seek *Ionian* for a Model Form  
 Which thine own "*Land of Liberty*" had given?  
 Such "Slaves" as thine are but in fancy seen:  
 For stern reality, by *Christians* (!) driven—  
 A *Negress* should thy prototype have been.

1851.

ON THE STATUE OF A BOY  
LISTENING TO A SHELL.

## SONNET 11.

HARK!—Tho' with nought to wake, on Earth's dry floor  
Where tenantless now left—as cast aground,  
The vacant *Shell*, where fancied waters pour,  
Hints the dread secrets of the dark Profound.  
While, wond'ring whence can come, as round and round—  
Within and out—examining all o'er,  
The simple Child delighted lists the sound,  
And deems indeed to hear the surges' roar.  
So, in the desert's stillness, breath'd aloud,  
Tho' mute the voice of Nature's viewless crowd,  
The inward sense the ceaseless accents hears.  
So, in the unbounded void, waked every where,  
Incessant sounds “the Music of the Spheres,”  
“Their Great CREATOR's glory to declare!”\*

1852.

\* Psalm xix. 1.

## THE POET DISTURBED BY THE TRAIN.

## SONNET 12.

AVANT! thou horrid—hybrid—Nondescript,  
 Of Water bred and Fire: that fliest thy way,  
 As if by furious Demons onwards whipt,  
 “Affrighting The Isle from its propriety!”  
 As tho’ The Powers of Darkness to convey,  
 To light out-dragg’d from some infernal Crypt;  
 Forth belching flame, distracting with dismay,  
 In baleful blasts and blacking mists equipt.  
 O, ere my bright imaginings to mar,  
 Would thou wert in—at—or where’er most far,  
 Or burst suicidal with terrific crash:  
 Yea—would thy diabolic wright might share  
 His monster’s fate; left, in the general smash,  
 Aye—“*Where?*” indeed! while Echo answers “*Where?*”<sup>4</sup>

## MY EASY CHAIR.

## SONNET 13.

O MY Easy Chair! what mine the lucky hap  
Possessing thee : wherein I me ensconce  
To enjoy my Book—Cigar—or both at once,  
Luxurious lodg'd in comfort's very lap.  
Shouldst thou me fail, O what a fearful gap  
Were in my pleasures made! how thee renounce!  
*Ex* thee my household edicts I pronounce,  
Or *in* thee take a renovating nap.  
More than Curule or Presidential Chair,  
Than Sofa—Couch—or other seat whate'er,  
I value thee, yea more than Throne of King.  
In all Life's cares—fatigues, aggress'd—aggrieved,  
For rest—repose—relief—recomforting,  
I fly to thee, in thy kind 'arms' received.

1860.

## DRESS.

## SONNET 14.

THERE nothing is (say some, who freely speak)  
That more declares a weak and trivial mind  
Than apish *Imitation*, every kind  
Of novelty, for that, still bent to seek.  
This to much else applies; but here confin'd  
To *Dress*; whose lovers would a new each week,  
Eager to adopt the Fashion's latest freak,  
Lest in the race of folly left behind.  
Not that we its sway should wholly disallow,  
For *in* the World we *with* the World must go,  
But only not to all its mandates bow.  
The Rule seems this: While singularity  
Avoiding, not more copying than to show  
That—where but following—you might lead the way.

## FASHION.

## SONNET 15.

Out, haughtiest of Despots! *Fashion* call'd:  
 To whose capricious yoke we see submit  
 The greatest as the meanest; howso gall'd,  
 And wincing 'neath, yet countenancing it.  
 Now short—now long, now close—now a loose fit,  
 Now crops—now wigs, now a hairy face—now bald;  
 Howe'er absurd—unseemly—or unfit,  
 To thy perpetual changes kept enthrall'd.  
 O when (as with all Tyrannies—made cease)  
 Will Men arouse, them from their chains release,  
 Nor own but Law's and Sense and Reason's sway!  
 For Us, meanwhile, the Old and New between,  
 Shunning extremes, keep we the middle way,  
 As with all else—*Safe in the happy mean.*

1856.

## WAR AND PEACE.

## SONNET 16.

BRIGHT shines the Laurel on the Warrior's brow ;  
And brighter still, in Country's cause if won  
The verdant Wreath, approved her worthy Son,  
And prideful him her guardian to avow.  
And to him sweet the thought, disarming now,  
Of dangers for her braved and duty done ;  
Awaiting his reward, tho' asking none  
Than that with which self-laud will him endow.  
Yet sweeter to the Man of Peace the thought,—  
That while, as fitly, serving her in aught,  
Not task'd his Fellows to destroy — with vaunt !  
O for the blessed time — the promis'd day,  
When the Olive shall the blood-stain'd Bay supplant,  
And all Mankind one Brotherhood display !

## THE NOTHINGNESS OF HUMAN GREATNESS.

ABDERAME III. KING OF CORDOVA. 900 — 1000.<sup>5</sup>

## SONNET 17.

IN Peace, as War — triumphantly maintained,  
Respected of my Allies, of my Enemies feared,  
Loved of my Subjects, to my Friends endeared,  
I now for over *Fifty Years* have reigned.  
Power — greatness — riches, pleasures unrestrained,  
Have all been mine; thro' brightest paths careered  
My prosperous way, it well might have appeared  
That to my bliss no wanting thing remained.  
In this high state, so fair in all to show,  
With care I've counted all the days throughout  
When I have really and truly happy been:  
Their whole amount has not surpass'd *Fourteen*.  
O Man! set not thy affections here on aught,  
Look not for real happiness below.\*

1858.

\* See the Spanish History.



## CHILDREN'S BALLS.

## SONNET 18.

A "CHILDREN'S BALL:" Where, with precocious airs,  
Taught to delight in dress and ornament,  
To look for admiration—compliment,  
And waken envy in their light compeers.  
To dance is but a fit accomplishment  
Of grown-up Youth: but, thus to excite in theirs  
The thoughts that fill the breasts of riper years,  
Must have sad influence on the moral bent.  
And tell us not, to vindicate the thing,  
That done by Kings and Queens, exhibiting  
The royal Child their Subject ones among:  
No authority, however great its height,  
Can justify what of itself is wrong,  
But only shows it in a stronger light.

1860.

## MODERN ARCHERY.

## SONNET 19.

YEA good the sport, and for as useful ends;  
 As practised erst, when our stout Yeomen drew  
 The unwilling bow that death-winged missiles threw,  
 As felt at Crecy\* by our Gallic friends.  
 Not so (at least in "our" fastidious view)  
 Our Modern Archery; that with flirting blends;  
 Where delicate Woman for the prize contends,  
 In mimic bending of the stubborn yew.  
 But, vain her aim, her masculine garb and air,  
 And various art of the Amazonian Fair!  
 Save to the butt—the bolt innocuous flies:  
 Far more becoming and more fatal they—  
 The shafts that Nature shoots from Beauty's eyes,  
 Tipp'd with good sense, and feather'd—Modesty.

1860.

\* 1546.

## MODERATENESS.

## SONNET 20.

SEEING every where the sad inordinateness  
Of Men's desires, as ever to their dole,—  
The Lindus Sage,\* with feign'd ambiguousness,  
Told us that "Half is better than the whole."  
By this but meant to urge their due control  
And government, avoiding all excess;  
Seeing that in every thing the life and soul  
Of true enjoyment lies in Moderateness.  
Yet do we still continue as of yore,  
Ne'er satisfied—still adding more to more,  
No limits setting to our wild desires.  
Will Man ne'er think how small his real need;  
And for what little time he this requires,  
Ere to that span Eternity succeed!

1860.

\* Cleobulus.

## LOOK TO THE END.

## SONNET 21.

“Look to the end.” So said the Sage\* of old.  
The wisest maxim e’er propounded yet;  
That should in golden characters be set  
Where’er great Truths are prominently told.  
If still by this our passions were controll’d,  
By folly’s—sin’s—temptations when beset,  
What sorrowing were us spar’d—remorse—regret,  
For all self-thwartings joyfully consoled.  
So e’er, when tempted to whate’er’s pursuit,  
Consider well the issue—what it’s fruit,  
Instant dismiss’d—if leading to aught of ill.  
’Bove all, in time cleans’d from condemning sin,  
Look to that End—assur’d—approaching still,  
When shall for us Eternity begin.

1860.

\* Solon.

## THE SPARTAN'S DEATH-WOUND.

## SONNET 22.

**DEATH-STRUCK** and prostrate in the battle-fray ;  
Ere wholly sense-bereft ; the day unwon  
His greatest pain ; a Sparta's genuine Son  
Prone on his face his end awaiting lay.  
When, with his blood life ebbing fast away,  
Half-closed his eyes, beholding, vain to shun,  
With uprais'd blade some Foemen on him run.—  
“Nay” (he feebly cried) “your blows in pity stay :  
“Stay, friends ! nor rearward thus, in helpless plight,  
“But let my breast receive your weapons all :  
“Lest she who bore me deem that slain in flight.  
“Too much she 'd blush to be of doubtful mind  
“If fell her son as should a Spartan fall,  
“In front his wounds, nor shameful struck behind.”

1857.

## THE SPARTAN MOTHER.

## SONNET 23.

IN Country's sacred cause against the Foe  
All her five Sons a Spartan Mother sent :  
Meanwhile awaiting, trembling for the event,  
The impending tidings of or joy or woe.  
When from the Camp a Helot came, all glow  
With heating speed, thence to the City bent :  
“ What news (She to him cries) from the armament ? ”  
‘ Your Sons—all five (replied he) are laid low.’  
“ Nay, Slave ! I ask'd thee not of them (said She)  
“ But how the field went with us.” Answer'd he—  
‘ The field is our's, and fled the Foe withal.’  
“ 'T is well (She said) nor more from Heaven I pray :  
“ My Sons have fallen e'en as her men should fall ;  
“ Prais'd be the Gods ! our Sparta has won the day.”

1860.

## B E A U T Y.

## SONNET 24.

How oft we give our praise to but a shell —  
To externals mere, while to inward beauties blind ;  
Refusing it to merit, unless join'd  
With outward show that might its value swell !  
See all Heaven's works ; that, perfect, all excel  
In beauteousness with usefulness combined ;  
Not barrenly to attractiveness confined,  
But — while delighting — serving us as well.  
So comeliness in Woman, that at best  
But accident, no praise commands for this,  
Nor merit has unless with worth possess'd.  
Howe'er admired — belauded — haply wooed,  
Mere Beauty — howso great — imperfect is :  
Nought 's really beautiful that not less *good*.

## TO A BEAUTY.

## SONNET 25.

YEA fair Thou art, with every charm replete  
Of beauteousness that highest of degree;  
And numerous wooers at thy feet we see:  
Yet wants there one thy Conquests to complete—  
Thy own—that o'er thyself, controlling thee  
In actions—feelings—thoughts; in all discreet,  
Nor vain of graces where no virtues meet,  
But letting Worth thy chief attraction be.  
However bright its temporary sheen,  
Mere Beauty fades—and quickly, sear'd while green;  
Bequeathing nought of pleasantness or good:  
While Merit charms to its last hour assign'd;  
Sweet-scented present, still with pleasure view'd,  
And leaving fragrant memories behind.

1860.



## “ THE GREAT.”

## SONNET 26.

How oft on the undeserving—th’ hateful even—  
Are praiseful names bestowed! with fame forestall’d,  
See the proud title of “ The Great ” where given  
To some who rather should “ *The Bad* ” be call’d.  
See “ Christian ” LOUIS, by war’s blood unpall’d,  
His Subjects butchering, to propitiate Heaven!  
See Europe’s crowds, by a BUONAPARTE enthrall’d,  
For mutual slaughter to the shambles driven!  
But, vainly would the crown’d Brigand expect  
That eminence mere his memory should protect  
From merited opprobrium and ill fame:  
In Truth’s clear light the character is view’d,  
To leave it but an ignominious name:  
None truly “ Great ” are but the not less *good*.

1860.

## THE GOOD MAN.

## SONNET 27.

THE Tyrant King, whose rule—however dire—  
Some splendour gilds; the Despot grandly vain;  
The ruthless Conqueror, whatso blood may stain  
His haughty banners,—all may fame acquire.  
Th' upstart, the usurper, all the mounting train,  
The ambitious all who to eminence aspire,  
All—worthless tho'—the vulgar crowd admire,  
E'en crime—if monstrous—may renown obtain.  
But the upright Man, tho' untrumpeted his name,  
With self-approval sweeter much than fame,  
May claim distinction far of higher kind:  
As well the Poet says, with justest laud,  
(In its large sense, and with due parts combin'd)  
“ *An honest Man's the noblest work of God.*”\*

1860.

\* Pope. Essay on Man. 4. 237.

## INGRATITUDE.

## SONNET 28.

YOUNG well has said upon Ingratitude—  
“ He that ’s ungrateful only one vice has ;  
“ All others may for virtues in him pass.”  
And true ; for this may all that ’s bad include.  
How base—how vile—acknowledgement to elude  
Of benefits ! and that one well may class  
With veriest crimes, and that but few surpass  
In odiousness and real turpitude.  
Yea seek we still, by all within our power,  
At once, and while our own the present hour,  
Good-offices and service to requite.  
Nor less, as bound in love to Fellow-Man,  
Their gratitude (not claiming) to excite,  
By doing others all the good we can.

1860.

## REVENGE.

## SONNET 29.

"REVENGE is sweet." Yes, to the Little Mind,  
 That, or for real or fancied injuries,  
 Avengement seeks; its justifying pleas—  
 Retort, redress, with chastisement combin'd.  
 Not so said HE who died to save Mankind;  
 Whose law is love: but "Love your Enemies;"\*  
 "Do good to them that hate you:"† where He sees  
 The nobler vengeance whereto Man is blind.  
 As holier—happier—'t is to love than hate,  
 Far better 't is—than to retaliate—  
 To pardon wrongs and good for evil pay.  
 Still "Seek we Peace,"‡ aloof from every feud;  
 And vengeance take by serving: in that way  
 "Revenge *is* sweet," and worthily pursued.

1860.

\* Matt. v. 44.

† Luke vi. 37, 38.

‡ Psalm xxxiv. 14; 1 Peter iii. 11.

## TRUTH.

## SONNET 39.

O TRUTH! where hid'st Thou? to what spot confin'd  
 Unreck'd of, or disputed when occur'd?  
 Save or in the Antient's\* Well or The Holy Word,  
 Where, among Men, on Earth—shall we thee find?  
 O, could'st thou still be spoken and still heard,  
 What miseries—woes—what ills were spar'd Mankind!  
 Could always thy clear light illumine the mind,  
 How priz'd thou wert, to all of false preferr'd!  
 Of Heavenly birth, with brightness thence to shine,  
 Tho' dimm'd at times thro' passion's medium view'd,  
 Adore we thee as holy and divine.  
 While, as the case, this may for limit call,  
 Not to work harm by overdoing good,  
 Still—trumpet-tongued—proclaim we Thee in all.

1860.

\* Democritus. See Note 7.

## SERVANTS.

## SONNET 31.

How hard the Menial's lot—unhappy fate!  
Especially when on weak Woman thrown:  
By constant labour task'd, up early and late,  
With scarce a moment that to call their own:  
But cloth'd and fed—nor always this to sate,  
To them ease—rest—amusement—are unknown;  
Their present wretched, their prospective state  
Still worse—past work when old and feeble grown.  
And bear we in mind that, had it pleased The Skies,  
Their fate might have been our's—in bondage ties.  
So still considerate with our Servants be;  
And, as GOD'S law (in part to merit thus  
Our better lot) with them and all blame-free,  
“Do to others as we would they should to us.”\*

1860.

\* Luke vi. 31.

## THE PATRIOT.

## SONNET 32.

Not the proud Premier, fiercely eloquent  
On Party measures, selfishly pursued;  
Regardless of the Nation's real good,  
But on its greatness (and his own) intent:  
Still less the noisy Demagogue, but bent  
On finding public griefs, exciting feud  
'Tween Class and Class, with mutual hate imbued;  
And "Freedom" crying, to free from all restraint:  
But the true Patriot—the pure—is one  
Who loves his Country for herself alone;  
As shown in all his acts; content for her  
'Neath undeserved obloquy to lie,  
Ingratitude—injustice—ills to bear,  
In exile wander or the field to die!

1860.

## IL DOLCE FAR NIENTE.

## SONNET 33.

To effeminate minds (here to Italy's confin'd,  
Tho' not less boasting minds of manliest worth ;  
For that the say here quoted there had birth)  
“ Doing nothing ” may be a “ sweet ” of sweetest kind.  
But to the children of the rugged North  
Far otherwise : as to Man's race assign'd,  
They labour love, with needful rest combin'd,  
And all that calls his best exertions forth.  
And foremost 'mong the energetic band,  
The *Briton* takes his place, with ready hand  
Whate'er becoming task to undertake :  
For honesty as industry renown'd,  
Nor shunning whatso toil for ease's sake,  
Still may he in that honour'd place be found !

1860.



## WASHINGTON'S SWORD.

## SONNET 34.

' TAKE thou this Sword, that with me still has warr'd :

' But 'gainst thy Fellow-Man with violence

' Ne'er to be used ; nor save in self-defence,

' Or for thy Country and its rights to guard.

' But, that once drawn, whate'er the consequence,

' Ne'er to resume its sheath, defiant bared,

' Till fix'd those rights—entire and unimpair'd ;

' Or but with life relinquish'd in the fence.'

So to his heir, *America's great Son*,\*

The brave—good—wise—the illustrious *WASHINGTON*,

With the arm the Patriot's precept to bequeath.

So ne'er but to maintain our rights in all,

Draw *We* the blade ; but, that once drawn, ne'er sheathe

Till those maintain'd or them maintaining fall.

1860.

\* See his Will.

DULCE ET DECORUM EST  
PRO PATRIA MORI.\*

## SONNET 35.

“T IS sweet and glorious (*guarding home and hearth*)  
“To for one’s Country die:” her soil to save  
From foreign rule, the yoke that would enslave  
The Land we love—the Land that gave us birth  
So said the Roman; and so have the brave  
In every Age—of every Clime on Earth,  
The gallant all, all they of manly worth,  
Who ask no prouder than the Soldier’s grave.  
And, foremost ’mong the Patriotic band,  
Our ENGLAND’S Sons conspicuous take their stand,  
Prepar’d and pleas’d in her defence to fall.  
Yea—come when may the Foe; while drawing breath,  
They in the strife shall meet the boastful Gaul,  
And Victors prove, or vanquish’d but in death!

1860.

\* Horace. *iii.* Ode. 11. 13.

## VATICINATION.

## SONNET 36.

Not here to speak of minor instances  
Of fail'd predictions on the affairs of Men ;  
Still less of the Almanack's great prophecies,  
Put forth by Sages of superior ken :  
How often we 've been told exactly when,  
Now long since past, The World should end : Ne'erless,  
Here still we are, going round and round as then,  
Awaiting the issue of some shrewder guess.  
As the Augurs, and the Oracles of old,  
Ne'er aught but in ambiguous terms foretold,  
Thus safely interpreting the Book of Fate ;  
Your safe Vaticinators, confident,  
Forbear the future to anticipate,  
Nor prophesy but *after* the event.

1860.

## DIVIDE ET IMPERA.

## SONNET 37.

*DIVIDE ET IMPERA.* So said Machiavelli,  
 Or some one for him : but, whoever said it,  
 As being a maxim little to his credit,  
 Deserving to be beaten to a jelly.  
 Not so said he<sup>8</sup> who invented (all have redd<sup>9</sup> it)  
 The Fable of The Members and the Belly ;  
 More worthy of the Land of Vermicelli ;  
 Nor they who reconciliation seek — not dread it.  
 How better far, how nobler — worthier — wiser —  
 To rule by love, than as would this adviser ;  
 And, 'stead fomenting quarrels, to compose them.  
 How hateful, sure, to govern by dividing !  
 I say it of all such means, — All who propose them —  
 Instead of honour — should have a good hiding.

## WEDDING CAKE.

## SONNET 38.

Lo—glistening bright in all Confection's sheen;  
Artistically wrought, whereo'er to trace  
The lighter structure, on the solid base—  
In ample round—of beauteous mould and mien:  
Conspicuous in pre-eminence of place,  
Where, midst surrounding dainties, high between,  
Fair over all, *The Wedding Cake* is seen,  
The Wedding Banquet's festal board to grace.  
But, 'neath that snowy crust of spicy sweets  
There danger lurks: Beware then of the Cake,  
Save sure unharm'd to enjoy the sugar'd meats.  
So in *Marriage*: Ere to make the important move,  
Think well upon the event; lest all too late  
The promis'd sweet a bitter poison prove.

1857.

## WILD OATS.

## SONNET 39.

O, WITH the experience of our years, could we  
Live our lives o'er again, with govern'd will,  
And careful but our duties to fulfil,  
How good—how wise—how faultless should we be!  
Yet doubtful this: for such, ne'er passion-free,  
Our weakness—folly—proneness to all ill,  
And blindness to enlightenment, we still  
Should err and sin, howe'er in less degree.  
But, while their shame and punishment we bear,  
We may in part our early faults repair,  
By teaching others how the like to shun:  
So, stranded tho' ourselves, succeeding Ships,  
Seeing us aground, may from the danger run,  
And, with more offing, sail securer deeps.

1860.

## CURIOSITY.

## SONNET 40.

CURIOSITY: the higher—nobler kind ;  
That knowledge seeks, in its acquirements shown ;  
Exploring all that worthy to be known,  
To expand—instruct—improve—adorn the mind.  
Far different that to Personals confin'd ;—  
Inquisitive, with queerying hints out-thrown,  
About the affairs of others, 'stead one's own ;  
Still prying some unpublish'd point to find.  
Indulge we in the first unstintedly :  
While from the other instant turn away,  
Howe'er excited, and unnotic'd pass.  
Remember that, by Satan prompted in  
The offending act, *Curiosity* it was  
That lost Mankind, committing the first sin.

## FESTINA LENTE.

## SONNET 41.

“*FESTINA LENTE.*” ‘Moderately speed’:  
The Augustan maxim, is an excellent one :  
For nothing can be thoroughly well done  
To which due time not given, as may need.  
Some for the opposite opinion plead —  
“Whate’er you do — do quickly”: holding none  
So good; while others, more to caution prone,  
Hold “Slow and sure.” to be the safer creed.  
Not only in Marriage, but in most affairs  
Of Life, the Wise of too much haste bewares;  
Lest to repent at leisure, when too late.  
So, in all our tasks, while not too hurriedly,  
With diligence pursue we them, nor bate  
Of this till done,—*Safe in the middle way.*

1860.



## ACCUMULATION.

## SONNET 42.

BEWARE *Accumulation* : th' hapless itch  
 Of having, ne'er suffic'd; still making crave  
 For more and more the more the cravers have,  
 And making really poor—however rich.  
 Then come Possession's cares; conjoint with which—  
 Penuriousness, that seeks in all to save,  
 Fearing to use what so much labour gave  
 To up-heap, while grasps at all within its reach.  
 Yea—More shun the superfluous than the scant:  
 For, 'spite the Proverb, all we do not want,  
 Stead "a good store"—in truth is a great sore.  
*Experto Crede* : trust me, to the letter:  
 If, with at need the means of getting more,  
 The less you have of anything the better.

1860.

## AN ENIGMA.

## SONNET 43.

AMONGST the Enigmas that were wont to give

Amusement erst, this for solution begs :

“ What animal is that, which on four legs

“ At morning goes, noon two, and three at eve ? ” <sup>10</sup>

’T is *Man* ; who, when he first begins to live,

Goes on all-fours ; grown-up walks on for leagues ;

And, late in life, when trudging him fatigues,

His feebleness shall with a staff relieve.

Now what the moral may from this be drawn ? —

That we should teach the *Child*, from Life’s first dawn,

To walk *uprightly* thro’ its whole extent ;

Confirm the *Man* on his own legs to stand ;

And, by which charity in general is meant,

Assist *Old Age* with ready-aiding hand.

1860.

## CHILDREN AT PLAY.

## SONNET 44.

SEE where, in general gambol or in turn,  
The Children band disport : now there—now here,  
Without a thought beyond the moment mere.  
O happy age, where nothing gives concern !  
Yet oft embitter'd by the treatment stern  
Of hirelings \_\_\_\_ Parents even, harsh \_\_\_\_ austere,  
And \_\_\_\_ chastising \_\_\_\_ unfeelingly severe ;  
As if a Child could know before to learn !  
O govern not their uninstructed years  
With too strict rule ! too soon Life's various cares  
Will for them come, to cloud all now bright-hued :  
Yea gently all their little faults condemn ;  
While blaming bad \_\_\_\_ applauding them for good,  
And teach them love by showing it to them.

1860.

## PAPER CHILDREN.

## SONNET 45.

LET Others boast of Offspring, Husbands — Wives —  
Keep raving on their Brats, still talk'd about  
As Prodigies; while the infant crew shriek — shout —  
Squeal — squall, as each in loud contention strives.  
To Manhood grown, as headlong passion drives  
Or sloth prevents, those “Fasts,” these “Slows” turn out.  
Give me my PAPER CHILDREN, youngsters stout,  
Race far less plaguy and of better lives.  
Nor Small-Pox — Measles — nor whatever ill  
E'er these attacks; in health and quiet still;  
Nor care nor trouble giving, but to frame.  
Moreo'er secure from Mortals' common doom,  
Transmitting to all time their Parents' name, —  
So 'scaped the Grocer's or Trunkmaker's tomb.

1847.

## CONSCIENCE.

## SONNET 46.

WHERE in the deep recesses of the heart  
Her Temple stands, an Oracle there is ;  
With "small still voice" e'er warning us in this,—  
'From Righteousness's Ways to ne'er depart.'  
This *Conscience* named : ne'er in her task remiss  
Of showing in all to act our proper part ;  
Still watchful all our ill designs to thwart,  
With sure remorse for aught that done amiss.  
O list we still this faithful Monitor ;  
That wittingly ne'er suffers us to err,  
But guides our paths as in GOD'S Word set forth :  
Pursuing those as is the light us given,  
And led by her, so take we our way on Earth  
To give us hope of The after-life of Heaven.

1860.

## THE SAFE SIDE.

## SONNET 47.

To say it lightly to the light of mind,  
While with all reverence, and severely thought,—  
How little do the many think about  
A Future State—the Life-end of Mankind!  
By nature hard, incredulous, and blind  
To all not seen by sight, they seek it nought;  
Howe'er by *Revelation* fully taught  
How Life-Eternal's certain road to find.  
As in all things precaution better is  
Than recklessness, O how much more in this—  
Of all Life's points—supremely so—the chief!  
Then, true or not, with Conscience for our guide,  
*Believe We*, and act up to our belief:  
So at all events *To keep the safer side.*

1860.

## LIFE.

## SONNET 48.

SOME seem to think that Heaven intended Man  
For but to suffer and let ills annoy ;  
As if creating him but to destroy ;  
And, e'en ere conscious, putting 'neath a ban.  
But sure far different the Celestial plan ;  
And meaning him, howe'er with some alloy,  
For happiness, in pleasurement and joy  
To make the most of Life's restricted span.  
Yea sure this view, undimm'd by bigot mists,  
Far more with Heaven's beneficence consists  
Than that which shows it savage and austere.  
Then, while for best employing our short-timed hours,  
And in all duties to ourselves severe,  
E'en with it's best—Enjoy we Life while our's.

1860.

## RELIGION.

## SONNET 49.

RELIGION, sweetest solace of Mankind :

Not as misrepresented—stern—austere ;

But light of yoke, nor—save to sin—severe ;

‘ Whose Paths are Peace with Pleasantness\* ’ combin’d.

Yea happy they, to Truth however blind,

Whate’er their Creed, if erring—yet sincere,

And ‘ *Pious to The Gods* ’ as taught, who here

Their woes’ relief and joys’ enhancement find.

But happiest far all who, here doubting nought,

Thro’ HIS blest Son by their Great Maker taught,

The *Christian’s*—the only true Religion know !

With Faith-based Hope they joyful look from this,

Releas’d from sin and all that stains below,

To Life-Eternal in eternal bliss.

1860.

\* Prov. iii. 17.



THE ATONEMENT.<sup>11</sup>

## SONNET 50.

SOUNDS The Last Trump. . . . Terrific call, for whom  
Not arm'd to hear! Awake, to sleep no more;  
Ye prone! erect ye. Earth! thy dead restore:  
To trial, All! from life, or from the tomb.  
Is come the day, to them of darkest gloom,  
When, at HIS judgement—God's dread bar before,  
All summon'd: Vain, then mercy to implore,  
When pass'd the sentence of eternal doom:  
Yea—dread Tribunal this! For, in HIS sight  
Who justified shall be?—who not own right  
The damning sentence, barring to forgive?  
But, at HIS side is ONE, our cause to plead;  
E'en CHRIST; who died, that fallen Man might live  
And—saved thro' HIM—from condemnation freed.

1850.



## NOTES.



## NOTES.



### NOTES TO THE PREFACE.

NOTE \*. Page x.

GUITTONÉ D'AREZZO, so called, like the other, from the place of his birth. He is not to be confounded with *Gui* d'Arezzo, the inventor of the modern System of Musical Annotation, who lived two Centuries earlier.

NOTE †. Page xi.

IN connection with this may be mentioned a variation of Sonnet, which I think is peculiar to the French; tho' of course the thing may be used in any language and with whatever forms; namely that in *Bouts-rimés*, 'rhymed endings'; where the rhymes are proposed respectively at the ends of the fourteen lines, to be written up to by the Versifier; and in which fulfilling all the usual conditions of the Sonnet, as if it were so spontaneously written: certainly a little *tour de force*, and where some latitude or licence may be allowed. We have here given a couple of specimens, merely to shew the thing; the rhymes being proposed by a friend, and the lines filled up by ourselves.

# BOUTS-RIMÉS SONNET.

## A POETICAL SCRAPE.

WELL, here I've got into a pretty - - - *hobble*,—  
 To my last shifts now likely to be - - - *driven*,—  
 Pledging myself, with but their endings - *given*,  
 To fill up Fourteen Lines or them up - - - *cobble*.  
 But, never mind; I'll try: nor toil nor - - - *trouble*  
 I'll spare therein—nor hardest labour - - - *even*;  
 Praying The Muse for some poetic - - - *leaven*,  
 To "raise" my Verse, while I my pains - *redouble*.  
 Good: now 't is well begun, and thus half - *ended*:  
 So I'll pursue my Task as first - - - *intended*;  
 The rhyming Edifice here firmly - - - *planted*,  
 To stand like stone, not merely lath-and- - - *plaster'd*.  
 Push on—go ahead; but one more Line is - *wanted*,—  
 Here 't is; they 're done, my *Bouts-rimés* are *master'd*.

1860.

# BOUTS-RIMÉS SONNET.

## WIGS.

WHEN Wigs prevail'd there was one called a - - - *Bag*;  
 Worn 'hind the neck, that notice seem'd to - - - *beg*  
 When duty doing; hanging on a - - - - - *peg*,  
 When not in use nor task'd its tail to - - - - - *wag*.  
 Whether this Wig of wisdom used to - - - - - *brag*  
 Is not determin'd; but I'll lay a - - - - - *keg*  
 Of spirits—full, not drain'd to its last - - - - - *dreg*,  
 That it did so as much as mane of - - - - - *Nag*.  
 Then, as to Wigs in general, some were - - - - - *big*,  
 Some small, some middling; but, if in a - - - - - *Bog*  
 They 'd all been dipp'd, as in a pail a - - - - - *Bug*,  
 Howe'er they on their sapience might them - - - - - *hug*,  
 I warrant you, thus powder'd for their - - - - - *tog*,  
 They 'd not much serv'd whosever head to - - - - - *rig*.

1860.

NOTE ‡. Page xiii.

*French Rhymes.*

A more full account of this is given in a little Work of our's, "Poetical Hints on the Art of Verse." published by Hatchard in 1852. Where also the here Sonnet 13 appears, as a specimen of the regular Form of the Poem.

NOTE §. Page xiv.

*Fourteener, i. e.* Fourteen Lines arbitrarily arranged.

WE have many good Sonnets: those of Bowles and Wordsworth especially are well known and deservedly admired: but very many more that come under Boileau's category of "unfound Phoenixes:" This partly from their irregularity of form, depriving them of half their merit. An instance of this we will here give in one of Mrs. C: Smith's, that otherwise are among the best we have; where the change may very easily be made without in the least altering the sense; and I think it will at once be felt how much more harmonious is the regular form than the other, and thus very much adding to its general beauty.

I have chosen this one on account of its being on the same subject as my own No. 44, but very differently treated.

This Sonnet, from the very irregular collocation of the rhymes, is particularly untuneful; namely, — The partial repetition of one of the rhymes of the first Quatrain in the second, and of one of those of the second Quatrain in the Tiercets; which makes it quite a discordant jumble of desinences, instead of the pleasing arrangement presented by the regular form. Mrs. S.'s ear was certainly not so good as her excellent heart.

Mrs. Robinson, with a just tho' somewhat ostentatious vindication of the genuine Poem, entitled her's LEGITIMATE SONNETS.

SONNET 27.

SIGHING I see yon little group at play,  
 By sorrow yet untouch'd, unhurt by care;  
 While free and sportive they enjoy to-day,  
 Content and careless of to-morrow's fare.  
 O happy age! when Hope's unclouded ray  
 Lights their green path and prompts their simple mirth,  
 Ere yet they feel the thorns that lurking *lay*,  
 To wound the wretched pilgrims of the Earth;  
 Making them rue the hour that gave them birth,  
 And threw them on a World so full of pain,  
 Where prosperous folly treads on patient worth,  
 And to deaf pride misfortune pleads in vain.  
 Ah, for their future fate, how many fears  
 Oppress my heart and fill mine eyes with tears!

C. S.

SONNET 27.

SIGHING I see yon little group at play,  
 By sorrow yet untouch'd\_\_ unhurt by care,  
 Content and careless of to-morrow's fare,  
 While free and sportive they enjoy to-day.  
 O happy age! when Hope's unclouded ray  
 Lights their green path and prompts the mirth all share;  
 Ere yet they feel the thorns that lurking there,  
 To wound Earth's wretched pilgrims on their way.  
 Making them rue the hour that gave them birth,  
 And threw them on a world so full of pain;  
 Where prosperous folly treads on patient worth,  
 While to deaf pride misfortune pleads in vain.  
 Ah, for their future fate how many fears  
 Oppress my heart and fill mine eyes with tears!

C. S.

## NOTES TO THE SONNETS.

NOTE 1, SONNET 5. Page 7.

*"Ariston men 'udor :"* 'Water — best of drinks !'

*Ariston men 'udor.* These are the opening words of Pindar's first Ode. They are placed as an Inscription on the Grand Pump-Room at Bath ; certainly one of the most felicitous applications of a classic dictum ever made. It was suggested by the late Dr. Harrington of that City.

NOTE 2, SONNET 7. Page 9.

*Buridanus his Ass.*

BURIDAN I. (or, according to the pedantic latinization of names of that day, *Buridanus*) was a French Writer of the Fourteenth Century ; who made himself famous by his dilemma of an Ass between hay on one side of him and water on the other, hesitating which to take ; to illustrate, tho' certainly somewhat indistinctly, the doctrines of Necessity and Free-Will, which must often have puzzled far greater Casuists, and that are not likely soon to be determined.

NOTE 3, SONNET 10. Page 12.

*On Powers's Statue of The Greek Slave.*

This Statue, a very beautiful piece of workmanship, by an American Artist Mr. Powers, was shown at the London Great Exhibition of 1851 and very generally admired. It pretty evidently was suggested by the Venus de Medicis, the attitudes being nearly similar ; but this one is in chains or at least manacled, which seems something superfluous in a young female Slave and in a public market. It is now in the possession of Lord Ward.



## NOTE 4, SONNET 12. Page 14.

*Aye — “Where?” indeed! while Echo answers “Where?”*

In the early days of Railway Travelling, after some serious accidents had happened, the common joke about them was, comparing them with those of Stage-Coaches, that, when one of the latter was overset the cry was “*There* you are!” but with a Railway Carriage it was “*Where* are you?” in reference to the *debris* of the unfortunate Traveller.

## NOTE 5, SONNET 17. Page 19.

*Abderame III. King of Cordova: 900 — 1000.*

I have done this Sonnet in French also, to exemplify what has been said above—Preface, P. xiii. on the masculine and feminine rhymes of the French.

## LE NÉANT DES GRANDEURS HUMAINES.

ABDERAMME III. ROI DE CORDOUE. 900—1000.

## SONNET 17.

Ou en Paix reposant, ou vainqueur à la Guerre,  
 Craint de mes Ennemis, et d'Allies respecté,  
 Aimé de mes Sujets—moins leur Roi que leur Père,  
 Par plus de cinquante ans maintenant j'ai regné.  
 Grandeurs —pouvoir—plaisirs, prevenant ma prière—  
 Surpassant mes désirs, tout m'a été donné :  
 On aurait bien pu croire, en cet état prospère,  
 Qu'aucun bien ne manquait à ma félicité.  
 Dans cette élévation, où tout dut me sourire,  
 J'ai compté tous les jours où j'avais pu me dire—  
 ‘Aujourd'hui j'ai été vraiment—réellement—heureux!’  
 La somme de ces jours, dont j'ai eu jouissance,  
 N'excède pas *Quatorze*. Homme! éteigne tes vœux;  
 Dans ce bas-Monde ne mets pas ta confiance.

NOTE 6, SONNET 28. Page 30.

*Ingratitude.*

At Athens there was a law against the ingratitude of Children to their Parents: And, as also at Rome, Patrons had the power of reducing again to servitude the Slaves they had enfranchised, for ingratitude to them.

NOTE 7, SONNET 30. Page 32.

*Save in the Antient's Well or the Holy Word.*

Democritus. He was called "the laughing Philosopher;" from his always laughing, or rather mocking, at every thing, making light of all human things; and was wont to say that 'Truth lay hid at the bottom of a Well.'

The Papist Queen Mary took for her 'Cognisance' or Crest Time dragging Truth out of a Pit, with the motto *Veritas Temporis Filia*: little thinking how prophetically applicable this was to some points of her Religion.

NOTE 8, SONNET 37. Page 39.

*Not so said he who invented:*

Of course old Esop; and so happily quoted by Menenius Agrippa on occasion of the feud between the Patricians and Plebeians of Rome under the Consuls.

## NOTE 9, SONNET 37. Page 39.

*All have redd it.*

‘Read’—‘redd.’ This word, used as it universally is for the Preterite and Participle Past as well as in other Moods and Tenses of the Verb ‘To read,’ is a remarkable instance of the servileness, or perhaps mere want of reflection, of people in general in following custom without reference to its necessity or propriety: when the words could so easily be distinguished by the mere change of a letter. Several of our Writers have endeavoured to mend this; some using *red*, but which is objectionable from the other meaning of the word; some (as Byron) *redde*, where the final *e* is superfluous. The here writing of it *redd* (which I have long used) is free from any objection whatever, and might surely at once be generally adopted; when, as in so many other cases, it would be only wondered at that the anomaly should have been permitted to exist so long.

There are some other words in which superfluous letters have lately been omitted, such as the *K* in those ending with the hard *C*: And we may hope in good time to see others follow, such as the *u* in those ending in ‘our’; tho’ for which, without being able to give any good reason for it, we confess to have a lingering Johnsonian predilection; and the final *e* in “therefore” “wherefore” &c.; which is very well in ‘before,’ where from ‘fore’ or forward, but obviously superfluous and misplaced in the two first words when meaning ‘for’—‘on account of.’ Meanwhile we hope this remark, as appearing just, will be not less coincided with than *redd*.

## NOTE 10, SONNET 43. Page 45.

The Enigma proposed by the Sphynx to Œdipus. See the Mythologic Fable.

## NOTE 11, SONNET 50. Page 52.

*The Atonement.*

DESBARREAUX was a famous (or rather infamous) French Libertine, who "flourished" about the middle of the Century before last. When growing old, and "the Devil was sick," he became devout, and wrote the fine Sonnet here quoted, with our Translation; that has given him a little niche in the Temple of Immortality. It suggested our own the here last, as a companion to — or perhaps (if it may be so deemed) in rivalry with it.

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## NOTE TO THE DESBARREAUX SONNET. Page 64.

\* "dessus." This "dessus" for *sur* ("above" for *on*) is a great blemish here; quite marring the effect of the otherwise fine close of this really fine Piece.

It has been noticed, so far as underlining it, by some of the French Critics; but, strange to say (at least we have not seen more in our circumscribed reading) they have not commented upon nor suggested any change in it; yet (at least as it seems to us) it might be much improved, if not altogether mended, by making it

"Mais sur *quelconque* endroit tombera ton tonnerre."

'*foudre*' would perhaps be better for the 'tonnerre' of line 13, and the "tout couvert" also of the last line might seem better *arrosé*.

It might further be observed, in reference to what has been said on the matter at Pg. xiii of the Preface, that the Quatrains of this Sonnet would be infinitely more harmonious, less monotonous if of the general form, as in our here Translation, instead of being thus successively alternato-rhymed.

What says the Reader? —

## LE SAUVEUR.

SONNET.

GRAND DIEU ! Tes jugemens sont remplis d'équité :  
Toujours Tu prends plaisir à nous être propice ;  
Mais j'ai tant fait de mal, que jamais Ta bonté  
Ne peut me pardonner sans choquer Ta justice.  
Oui, mon Dieu, la grandeur de mon impiété  
Ne laisse à Ton pouvoir que le choix du supplice :  
Ton intérêt s'oppose à ma félicité,  
Et Ta clémence même attend que je périsse.  
Contente Ton desir puisqu'il T'est glorieux :  
Offense-Toi des pleurs qui coulent de mes yeux ;  
Tonne, frappe, il est tems ; rends-moi guerre pour guerre.  
T'adore en périssant la raison qui T'aigrit :  
Mais *désus*\* quel endroit tombera Ton tonnerre,  
Qui ne soit *tout couvert* du sang de JÉSUS-CHRIST.

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## THE ATONEMENT.

From the french of Desbarreaux.

"*Grand Dieu ! tes jugemens sont remplis d'équité.*"

SONNET.

THY judgements, Lord ! with goodness all consent :  
To spare — Thou claim'st Thy first prerogative.  
But, such my sin — forbidding to forgive,  
'T would wrong Thy justice should it here relent.  
Yea, Lord ! the greatness of my guilt's extent  
Thee but a choice of penalty can give :  
Thy interests are against that I should live ;  
And e'en Thy mercy asks my punishment.  
Since for Thy glory 't is, Thy wrath unbar ;  
Let e'en my tears but more Thine ire provoke :  
Hurl — strike, 't is time ; return me war for war.  
In death I kiss the castigating rod. . . .  
But, where can fall Thy bolts' avenging stroke,  
That not besprent with CHRIST's redeeming blood !

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## APPENDIX.

## SONNETS.

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CÆSAR AT THE RUBICON.

ARS EST CELARE ARTEM.

TO HOPE.

MEMORY.

LET WELL ALONE.

ALLEGRO.

PENSEROSO.

KNOWLEDGE.

DREAMS.

DOCTORS.

CRITICISM.

THE SUN.

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## CÆSAR AT THE RUBICON.

### SONNET.

ALAS for our short-sightedness !  
How many an action, great or small,  
That awe—amuse us—or appal,  
Their motives veil in doubtfulness.  
The most conceal, none quite confess ;  
Some seem as having none at all ;  
While others (nor a few withal)  
Would puzzle — — himself to guess.—  
When CÆSAR cross'd the Rubicon,  
And proudly cried “ The die is thrown ;  
“ The event—whate'er—we must abide.”  
What think you was his strongest reason,—  
Ambition—patriotism—treason ?  
No : but to get on t' other side.

M. M.

1860.



ARS EST CELARE ARTEM.


SONNET.

NOUGHT perfect is ; none from defects are free ;  
Whate'er their merits, all betray some flaws :  
And nothing 's easier, when intent to see,  
Than to detect some breach of Writing's laws.  
So your *Smelfungus* fancies that, because  
A thing looks easy, it must easy be ;  
And, howso good in sentence limb and clause,  
Allows it worth but in its "*hard's*" degree.  
But he forgets, if e'er indeed he knew,  
That the excellence of Art, kept out of view,  
Is to conceal itself and seem all ease.  
Whate'er aspires to being written well  
Should neither smack, indifferent to please,  
Of negligence, nor of the lamp should smell.\*

M. M.

1860.

\* "To smell of the Lamp." This was said by Pytheas, a rival Orator, of the harangues of Demosthenes ; meaning their being too laboured, and wanting the ease and charm of spontaneousness.



## TO HOPE.

### SONNET.

SWEET HOPE! tho' at times thy promises o'erswell'd—  
Nor always kept, and veil'd to our dim scan;  
That helpst to lengthen Life's restricted span,  
And hast our way encourag'd and upheld.  
Well was it fabled erst,—that when, of eld,  
Pandora shed her box of ills on Man,  
To alleviate them (a gracious Heaven's kind plan)  
Thou at its bottom still remaind'st withheld.  
O do Thou still, thro' Life's mischanceful stray,  
Attend our paths, to smooth and clear their way,  
Despair's dark clouds dispelling with thy light.  
So, based on Faith—and confident in this,  
With Thee to look, all doubts and fears to slight,  
From transient Earth to Realms of endless bliss.

M. M.

1860.

## MEMORY.

### SONNET.

Lo MEMORY : stern recorder of events !

At times if light, far oft of sombre cast ;  
That at Life's close recalls to us the past—  
Our actions all— their motives and intents.

In their true colours pictur'd then it paints

Our errors— follies— faults (soft-term'd the last)  
That in the conscious mind, where rooted fast,  
Not Lethe's wave could blot nor wash their taints.

O that we could so order our each thought—

Each word and deed, as that we could in aught  
With self-approval recollect them all !

Then Memory were indeed (as all us given)

A blessed gift ; our safeguard from to fall,  
Life's sweet remembrancer, and pledge of Heaven.

M. M.

1860.

## LET WELL ALONE.

SONNET.

*QUIETA non movere* : “ Let well alone.”

A noted Maxim this, of ancient date ;

Tho’ chiefly applied to health, that may relate

To all, a general as an excellent one.

And, in these days so to innovation prone,

When restless Censors all investigate

For Note, Improvement, Change—at any rate,

’T is well to mind it in whatever done.

Change for mere change’s sake no advantage brings ;

Unnecessarily disturbing things

Till then esteem’d firm-settled and fault-free.

As in most cases where for Truth contending,

That lies midway, the Rule here seems to be,—

“ Let well alone,” while see what may want mending.

M. M.

1860.

## ALLEGRO.

### SONNET.

WHAT! shall Ethics alone—the Didactical Stave—  
The euphonious chords of THE SONNET employ?  
Shall she only intone the “severe” and the “grave”,  
While all mute for the jocund—delightment—and joy?  
Nay, already restricted, nor let to deploy  
Beyond Twice Seven Lines, and to forms a mere Slave,  
While she keeps her fix’d limits (and great their annoy!)  
She her claim to self-government never can waive.  
So here let her, attuning the “lively” and “gay”,  
Give a cheer for amusement—for pleasure—and play,  
For the light as the weighty, both duly to prize:  
And tho’ generally serious, at times perhaps sad,  
Let her show, while in every thing scouting the bad,  
She can laugh and be sober—be “merry and wise.”

M. M.

1860.

## PENSEROSO.

### SONNET.

WE are told that the seat of all Thought is the brain :

And that those, who would write or a page or a tome,

Must apply for it there, where a Genius (or Gnome)

Gives it out as the lobes—more or less—may contain.

So to one thus employed once a Wag in this strain—

“ Friend ! you knock at your pate, and you think wit will come :

“ Knock as long as you will, there ’s nobody at home.”

Intimating thereby that his labour was vain.

So at times with myself ; when I fain would compose,

About something or other, in Verse or in Prose,

And my wit seem reluctant the call to obey ;

I apply to my forehead, my *νοῦς*’s street-door ;

And, “ my pensive *brow* striking\* ” (not “ bosom ”) I say—

“ Here lies *Thought*.” : for a subject then turning it o’er.

M. M.

1860.

\* See Pope’s Epitaph on Gay.

## KNOWLEDGE.

### SONNET.

“ A little learning is a dangerous thing.”\*

Yes to the Foolish, using it amiss

In practice or by vainly exhibiting ;

Not to the Wise, discreetly using his.

As better than to starve a mouthful is,—

So better 't is to know, tho' unfathoming,

Some little of a point—whatever this,

Than wholly in ignorance continuing.

But there is one, of which, whate'er attain'd,

The least is good, nor can too much be gain'd,—

*The Knowledge of Ourselves*†—both Frame and Soul,

Our dispositions, passions, powers ; that so,

By their due regulation and controul,

We in all for best may thro' Life's journey go.

M. M.

1860.

\* Pope. Essay on Criticism. V. 217.

† Γνωθὶ σεαυτὸν. “ Know thyself : ” a saying of Chilo, one of the seven Sages of Greece.

## DREAMS.

### SONNET.

WHEN, for its necessary rest compell'd,  
The *Body* sleeps, the *Mind*, unconscious then,  
Chaotic mix'd — the past recalls again ;  
While all the senses in suspension held.  
These are our *Dreams* ; all vainly overhaul'd  
For their connection, far beyond our ken ;  
Impressions made, unwotted how or when,  
Nor by what agency in sleep recall'd.  
The evidence this of some deputed Power  
Yet self-impelling ; that, for Life's brief hour,  
Informs the Frame, and in its pathway leads ; —  
The ever-living SOUL, that shall one day  
Be call'd to account for all its *conscious* deeds,  
For or a curs'd or blest ETERNITY !

M. M.

1860.



## DOCTORS.

### SONNET.

“WHO shall decide when Doctors disagree !”

The Big-Wigs of the several Faculties,—

D.D.s, Mus: D.s, L.L.D.s, and M.D.s :

If they concur in nothing—how shall we !

’T is with them still The Fable of (doubt-free)

The Travellers and Chameleon ; where each sees

With his own eyes alone, the other’s pleas

Denying for an equal power to see.

O learned Wights ! as with the Lizard’s hues,

Remember things *may* appear in different views

To different sights, nor your’s the right withal.

So, as our case, if well or if we be sick,

With more of general good *advice* in all,

Give us less Dogma—Discord—Law—and Physic.

M. M.

1860.

## CRITICISM.

### SONNET.

AWARE how vulgar malice loves to jeer  
And laugh at others' cost, on whatso grounds ;  
Supplying it for this with flout and fleer,  
The baser-born *Review* its themes propounds.  
With ready blame, that good and bad confounds ;  
Cold-eyed to beauties, while to blots severe ;  
- Regardless how that censure wrongs or wounds ; —  
Too often this the Censor's practice here.  
Far different the honest Critic's part should be :  
Intent but to do justice, passion-free,  
With candour fairly examining the Piece ;  
By reasoning, with him leading us along ;  
So not by partialness nor prejudice  
Mislead the Reader nor the Writer wrong.

M. M.

1860.

## THE SUN.

### SONNET.

GREAT source of day, Blest SUN ! in sheen bedight,  
Releasing all from Night's obscuring sway,  
All vivifying with thy beaming ray,  
Grateful as grand, beneficent as bright !  
Seeing—feeling—every where, along with light,  
Thy genial influence benign, well may  
The untutor'd Savage deem thee DEITY,  
Lord of that Universe thou show'st to sight.  
But whence thy means t' have us illum'd and warm'd  
Since for us Time began? What hand thee form'd  
And all the myriad Worlds that round thee shine?  
Nay, far beyond all human scan to explore  
That wond'rous Power—that plastic Hand divine :  
Enough for us to own it and adore !

M. M.

1860.

